

IDAHO NEWS RELEASE



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Idaho Sheep Inventory Unchanged

All sheep and lamb inventory in Idaho on January 1, 2003, totaled 260,000 head, unchanged from last year, according to the Idaho Agricultural Statistics Service. The January 1, 2003 inventory equals last year as the lowest inventory since records began in 1920. Breeding sheep and lamb inventory on January 1, 2003 totaled 225,000 head. Breeding ewes one year old and older totaled 184,000 head, unchanged from January 1, 2002. Market sheep and lambs on January 1, 2003 totaled 35,000. The 2002 lamb crop of 240,000 head was down 6 percent from the 255,000 head reported in 2001.

All sheep and lamb inventory in the United States on January 1, 2003, totaled 6.35 million head, down 5 percent from 2002 and 9 percent below two years ago. The inventory has trended down since peaking at 56.2 million head in 1942. Breeding sheep inventory declined to 4.68 million head on January 1, 2003, down 5 percent from 4.91 million head on January 1, 2002. Ewes one year old and older, at 3.79 million head, were 5 percent below last year. Market sheep and lambs on January 1, 2003 totaled 1.67 million head, down 6 percent from January 1, 2002. Market lambs comprised 96 percent of the total. Twenty-six percent were lambs under 65 pounds, 17 percent were 65-84 pounds, 24 percent were 85-105 pounds, 29 percent were over 105 pounds, and 4 percent were market sheep. The 2002 lamb crop of 4.36 million head was down 3 percent from 2001 and established a new record low. The lambing rate was 110 per 100 ewes one year old and older on January 1, 2002, unchanged from 2001. The number of operations with sheep during 2002 totaled 64,170, down 1 percent from 2001 and 3 percent from 2000.

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